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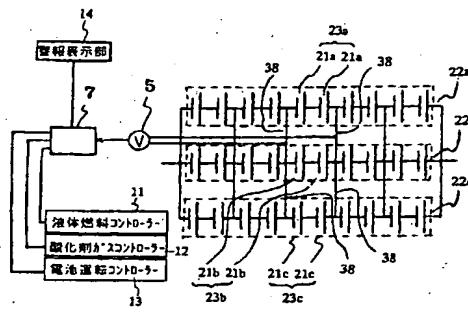
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(54) Title: LIQUID-FUEL FUEL CELL, OPERATION MONITORING METHOD FOR MONITORING OPERATION THEREOF, AND OPERATION MONITORING DEVICE

(54) 発明の名称: 液体燃料形燃料電池とその運転を監視する運転監視方法および運転監視装置



14...ALARM INDICATION UNIT 12...OXIDIZER GAS CONTROLLER
11...LIQUID FUEL CONTROLLER 13...CELL OPERATION CONTROLLER

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(57) Abstract: A liquid-fuel fuel cell comprising a unit cell that has a structure in which a negative electrode and a positive electrode are opposed with a polymer electrolyte having a proton conductivity interposed between them, a liquid fuel is supplied to the negative electrode, and air is supplied to the positive electrode, or the liquid-fuel cell comprising a cell stack where unit cells are stacked, an operation monitoring method for monitoring the operation, and an operation monitoring device are disclosed. The inventors have found out a degradation phenomenon of such a liquid-fuel fuel cell in which the exhausted fuel on the negative electrode side blackens and the cell performance irreversibly degrades if the output current is excessively increased, or if the supply of air or liquid fuel is insufficient. According to the invention, to prevent such degradation phenomenon, the liquid-fuel fuel cell has at least one of functions of increasing the supply of air or liquid fuel, issuing an alarm, decreasing the output current, and stopping the operation of the fuel cell when it is detected that the potential between the negative and positive electrodes monitored for at least one cell is below a predetermined negative potential.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP03/07622

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int.Cl⁷ H01M8/04, H01M8/10, H01M8/24

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Int.Cl⁷ H01M8/04, H01M8/10, H01M8/24

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

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Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	WO 97/21256 A1 (CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY), 12 June, 1997 (12.06.97), Whole document; Figure 1 to 12 & JP 11-510311 A & JP 2002-110177 A & JP 2002-110197 A & JP 2002-110199 A & JP 2002-117863 A & JP 2002-117864 A	1, 4-7, 2-3
Y	EP 1134830 A2 (SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS CO., LTD.), 19 September, 2001 (19.09.01), Whole document; Figs. 1 to 13 & JP 2001-283892 A & US 2002/0076597 A1	1, 4-7, 2-3
Y	WO 02/07242 A2 (THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY), 24 January, 2002 (24.01.02), Whole document; Figs. 1 to 10 (Family: none)	1, 4-7, 2-3

 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search
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C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	JP 2002-151134 A (Sony Corp.), 24 May, 2002 (24.05.02), Full text; Figs. 1 to 9 (Family: none)	1, 4-7, 2-3
Y	EP 0982788 A2 (GENERAL MOTORS CORP.), 01 March, 2000 (01.03.00), Claims; drawings & JP 2000-67896 A	1, 4-7, 3
Y	EP 1069636 A2 (General Motors Corp.), 17 January, 2001 (17.01.01), Whole document; Figs. 1 to 5 & JP 2001-43880 A & US 2002/0051899 A1	1, 4-7, 3
Y	JP 2002-8702 A (Idemitsu Kosan Co., Ltd.), 11 January, 2002 (11.01.02), Full text; Figs. 1 to 2 (Family: none)	1, 4-7, 3
Y	JP 64-76682 A (Mitsubishi Electric Corp.), 22 March, 1989 (22.03.89), Full text; Figs. 1 to 2 (Family: none)	2-3
A	JP 2000-268836 A (Sony Corp.), 29 September, 2000 (29.09.00), (Family: none)	1, 4-7
P, A	DE 10161234 A1 (Plug Power, L.L.C.), 11 July, 2002 (11.07.02), & US 2002/0081466 A1 & JP 2002-289240 A	1, 4-7
A	EP 0055016 A1 (WESTINGHOUSE ELECTRIC CORP.), 30 June, 1982 (30.06.82), & JP 57-130381 A & US 4490444 A	2-3
A	DE 10042210 A1 (SOFCo), 29 March, 2001 (29.03.01), & JP 2001-85041 A & US 6368739 B1	2-3